

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims to read as follows wherein changes in a claim are shown by strikethrough for deleted matter and underlining for added matter:

1. Method for the preparation of a meat substitute product which comprises protein, wherein:

1) a protein material, a hydrocolloid which precipitates with metal cations and water are combined~~added to one another~~,

2) the composition from step 1) is formed into a homogenous mixture,

3) the mixture from 2) is mixed with a solution of a metal cation with a valency of at least 2, in order to form a fibrous product,

4) the fibrous product is isolated,

~~characterized in that~~wherein

5) ~~the~~ the protein material comprises a milk protein material, and

6) ~~the~~ the mixture of milk protein material, hydrocolloid which precipitates with metal cations and water is formed in the presence of an amount of a ~~phosphate material~~ material capable of complexing calcium ions;

2. (currently amended) Method according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that first of all~~ wherein a mixture of the protein material and water is made, the ~~phosphate material~~ material capable of complexing calcium ions is added to this mixture and then the hydrocolloid which precipitates with metal cations is introduced.

3. (currently amended) Method according to claim 1, ~~or 2, characterized in that~~
wherein the milk protein material is selected from

- curd from cheesemaking
- cheese
- powdered milk
- whey protein
- alkali metal, alkaline-earth metal and ammonium caseinate.

4. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of claims 1—3,~~
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the material capable of complexing the calcium ions is a phosphate
material and is selected from alkali metal and ammonium salts of phosphoric acid or
polyphosphoric acid.

5. (currently amended) Method according to claim 4, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein
the phosphate material is selected from disodium hydrogen phosphate, sodium
hexametaphosphate and trisodium phosphate.

6. (currently amended) Method according to claim 4, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein
the phosphate material is sodium polyphosphate $(\text{NaPO}_3)_n$, wherein $n \sim 25$.

7. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of claims 4, —6,~~
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the amount of phosphate material is at least sufficient to form a
complex with free calcium ions which are present.

8. (currently amended) Method according to claim 7, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein
the amount of phosphate material is 0.1 – 1.5% by weight, based on the total of all the
constituents of the homogenous mixture.

9. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~1,
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the hydrocolloid which precipitates with metal cations is present in
an amount of 0.1 – 10% by weight, based on the total of all the constituents of the homogenous
mixture.

10. (currently amended) Method according to claim 9, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein
the hydrocolloid which precipitates with metal cations is sodium alginate.

11. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~4,
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the pH of the homogenous mixture of protein, hydrocolloid which
precipitates with metal cations, phosphate material and water is set to a value in the range from 4
– 7.

12. (currently amended) Method according to claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein to prepare a product with a meat-type structure starting from milk protein material, the pH is set to a value between 5.0 and 7.0.

13. (currently amended) Method according to claim 11, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein to prepare a product with a fish-type structure starting from milk protein material, the pH is set to a value between 4.5 and 6.0.

14. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein a finishing material selected from flavouring, colouring and vegetable or animal fat, vegetable or animal protein and/or mixtures of two or more such materials is added to the homogenous mixture which has been formed.

15. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of claims 1, –14,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ wherein to form a fibrous product starting from cheese curd:

a) identical quantities by weight of cheese curd and water at approximately 50°C are mixed (total weight 2A) in the presence of 0.8 – 1.2% by weight, based on 2A, of sodium polyphosphate,

b) 2.5 – 3.5% by weight, based on 2A, of sodium alginate, as well as water at approximately 50°C in an amount by weight A, are added with stirring,

c) the homogenous mixture formed is mixed with stirring with a 3 – 5% by weight strength CaCl_2 solution in an amount by weight A to form a fibrous product, and

d) the fibrous product formed is isolated and finished.

16. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of~~ claims 1, —14, characterized in that
wherein to form a fibrous product starting from cheese:

a) identical quantities by weight of grated cheese and water at approximately 50°C are mixed (total weight of 2B) in the presence of 0.8 – 1.2% by weight, based on 2B, of sodium polyphosphate,

b) 2.5 – 3.5% by weight, based on 2B, of sodium alginate, as well as water at approximately 50°C in an amount by weight B, are added with stirring,

c) the homogenous mixture formed is mixed with stirring with a 3 – 5% by weight strength CaCl_2 solution in an amount by weight B to form a fibrous product,

d) the fibrous product formed is isolated and finished.

17. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of~~ claims 1, —14, characterized in that
wherein to form a fibrous product starting from sodium caseinate:

a) a 10 – 15% strength by weight solution of sodium caseinate in water at approximately 50°C is made (total weight C) in the presence of 0.2 – 0.4% by weight of sodium polyphosphate, based on C,

b) butter is added in an amount of 15 – 20% by weight, based on C,
c) 3 – 5% by weight, based on C, of sodium alginate, as well as water at approximately 50°C in an amount by weight of 80 – 95% by weight, based on C are added with stirring,

d) the homogenous mixture formed is mixed with stirring with 3 – 5% strength by weight calcium chloride solution in an amount of 80 – 95% by weight, based on C, to form a fibrous product, and

e) the fibrous product formed is isolated and finished.

18. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims 1, 14,~~ characterized in that wherein to form a fibrous product starting from whey protein,

a) a 15 – 20% strength by weight solution of whey protein in water at approximately 50°C is made (total weight D) in the presence of 0.2 – 0.4% by weight of sodium polyphosphate, based on D,

b) butter is added in an amount of 12 – 18% by weight, based on D,

c) 3 – 7% by weight, based on D, of sodium alginate, as well as water at approximately 50°C in an amount of 80 – 85% by weight, based on D, are added with stirring, and

d) the homogenous mixture formed is mixed with stirring with 3 – 5% strength by weight calcium chloride solution in an amount of 80 – 85% by weight, based on D to form a fibrous product,

e) the fibrous product formed is isolated and finished.

19. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of the claims 1, —14,~~
~~characterized in that~~

wherein to form a fibrous product starting from powdered milk:

a) a 25 – 35% strength by weight solution of skimmed milk powder in water (total weight E) is made in the presence of 0.5 – 1.0% by weight, based on E, of sodium polyphosphate,

b) butter is added in an amount of 11 – 15% by weight, based on E,

c) 4 – 6% by weight, based on E, of sodium alginate, as well as water at approximately 50% C in an amount by weight of 65 – 75%, based on E, are added with stirring,

d) the homogenous mixture formed is mixed with stirring with a 3 – 5% strength by weight CaCl_2 solution in an amount by weight of 65 – 75%, based on E, to form a fibrous product, and

e) the fibrous product formed is isolated and finished.

20. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of claims 1, —14,~~
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the protein material is milk protein material selected from powdered milk, whey protein and caseinate, and the method is carried out in the absence of a phosphate material.

21. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of~~ claims 1, —20, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the fibrous product, after it has been formed and isolated, is pasteurized in order to be finished.

22. (currently amended) Method according to ~~one or more of~~ claims 1, —21, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the fibrous product is packaged.

23. (currently amended) Meat substitute product obtained using the method according to ~~one or more of~~ claims 1—21.

24. (currently amended) Savoury or sweet snack obtained by processing a fibrous product formed with the aid of the method according to ~~one or more of~~ claims 1—21.

25. Ready to consume meat substitute product obtained by culinary processing of a product according to claim 23.